HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR, RADIO SERIES (the original scripts)

Series 1, Episode 1.
The First Night Party.

TONY HANCOCK
With
MOIRA LISTER, BILL KERR AND SIDNEY JAMES
In

"HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR"
(First Of Series)

Dramatis Personae

Tony Hancock (a waif) ..... Mr. Anthony Aloysius St. John Hancock.
Moira Lister (Tony's girlfriend) .....Miss Moira Lister.
Bill Kerr (Tony's best friend).....Mr. Bill Kerr.
Sidney James (a friend?).....Mr. Sidney James.
Coatsleeve Charlie.....Mr. Gerald Campion.
Lord Dockyard.....Mr. Kenneth Williams.

INCIDENTAL MUSIC COMPOSED BY STANLEY BLACK
And recorded by the BBC REVUE ORCHESTRA,
Conducted by HARRY RABINOWITZ

SCRIPT BY RAY GALTON & ALAN SIMPSON.

ANNOUNCER, ADRIAN WALLER

PRODUCED BY DENNIS MAIN WILSON.

REHEARSALS: SATURDAY 30th OCTOBER 1954: 10.00 - 12.00.am. CAMDEN

RECORDING: SATURDAY 30th OCTOBER 1954: 12.30 - 1.15.pm. CAMDEN

TRANSMISSION: TUESDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 1954: 9.30 - 10.00.pm. LIGHT & G.O.S.

REPEAT: SATURDAY 6th NOVEMBER 1954: 10.30 - 11.00. pm. G.O.S.

1. GRAMS: OPENING SIGNATURE TUNE - " HANCOCK THEME" - UNDER

2. ANNOUNCER: The first night of a new radio series is usually marked by a small celebration of some sort - but Tony Hancock is really doing it in style. He is going to throw a dinner party. So let's go over to Tony's flat in the English quarter of London's - West End, where he and Bill Kerr are making the arrangements...

EFFECTS: (TYPEWRITER CLACKING. VERY SLOW & DELIBERATELY. ONE FINGER)

TONY: Hurry up Kerr. Haven't you finished typing out those invitations yet?

BILL: Don't rush me, don't rush me.

EFFECTS: (TYPEWRITER CONTINUES SLOW CLACKING. DING OF BELL. CARRIAGE SLIDES BACK. SLOW PAUSE. SLOW CLACKING AGAIN.)

TONY: It might help if you took those gloves off.

BILL: My hands are cold.

EFFECTS: (MORE SLOW CLACKING SEVEN KEYS STRUCK)

BILL: Anyway, what's wrong with typing in gloves?

EFFECTS: (MORE SLOW CLACKING. SIX KEYS STRUCK)

BILL: I like typing in gloves.

EFFECTS: (MORE SLOW CLACKING. FIVE KEYS STRUCK)

BILL: Lots of people type in gloves.

EFFECTS: (MORE SLOW CLACKING. FOUR KEYS STRUCK)

TONY: Not in boxing gloves. Come on, take 'em off.

BILL: This is the only pair of gloves I have.

TONY: Look - if you must type in gloves, use a pair of Moira's.

BILL: These are Moira's. Now quit flapping. I've nearly finished.

TONY: I should think so. Sixty five invitations to be done. You've taken five hours over it.

EFFECTS: (FIVE MORE CLACKS - LAST TWO FAST AND FINAL)

BILL: There you are - finished.

TONY: Good, that's one done. Let's have a look at it. (READS) " Dear Sir or.. Or…

BILL: Madam.

TONY: Oh, yes. It's the first time i've seen it spelt that way - M - percentage - five - eighths - question mark, - A - semicolon - M.

BILL: Look Tub, I only hit the keys- after that they're on their own. Read the rest of it.

TONY: (READS) " You are cordially invited to a dinner party to celebrate the first programme of my new radio series, ex-ex-ex-ex-ex-ex-ex- .

BILL: I was chasing a fly across the paper.

TONY: And the smudge ?

BILL: He didn't quite make it.

TONY: Where are we? (READS) " Dinner will be served at 8.30 sharp. Dress optional. Bring your own wife. " Yes, that should be alright.

BILL: I think the whole idea's screwy. What do you want to throw a dinner party for anyway?

TONY: Diplomacy. Get 'em all on my side - the National newspapers - the BBC. I'm inviting all the radio critics and high BBC Officials.

BILL: How high?

TONY: By the time they leave here, it'll be coming out of their ears. I've got fifty-eight barrels of high-octane booze coming in.

BILL: Oh, the strong stuff huh?

TONY: Strong? They'll be able to raise their hats without using their hands. Can't go wrong. Get 'em in a good mood. Ha! Ha! That's it. Glowing write-ups in the papers - fat contracts in me pocket. I'll be made. I'll be famous. Success . Money. Riches. Wealth. A star. I'll have a little engine put on me tandem.

BILL: With a glass partition for the chauffeur.

TONY: Two tone handlebars, curtains, a speaking tube - faster Jenkins… (SLOBBERING LAUGH) . Power. Quick - get the invitations finished.

BILL: How about some money for the stamps?

TONY: Stamps? You don't want to waste money on stamps. Give us a pencil… O.H.M.S. .. that'll do.

BILL: O.H.M.S.?

TONY: Old Hancock's Mail Swindle. Now - we've got to get organised. Sixty-five's a lot of people to cater for. We'll have to get some more chairs in.

BILL: Yeah - sixty-four to be precise.

TONY: Have we only got one chair?

Bill: Yeah - and that's only got one leg.

TONY: Have you joined that cricket club again? We should have chairs. Have we got any cutlery?

BILL: That's expensive isn't it?

TONY: No, you can get a suitcase full for the price of a train ticket. Another thing, look at all this crockery. Broken plates, cracked saucers, cups with no handles on - I give you ten pounds to go out and buy some new stuff and this is what you bring back. This lot looks like it came out of a shooting gallery.

BILL: You've been following me.

TONY: Alright, come on - how much did they cost you?

BILL: Sixpence a sack including two pots of glue.

TONY: Well, that's not too bad. Come on - give us the change - nine pounds nineteen and six please.

BILL: Yeah - well that's what I wanted to tell you about Tub.

TONY: Where's me change?

BILL: I'm coming to it.

TONY: Well, hurry up.

BILL: We've known each other for many years now and I am proud to say that through mutual trust and understanding, our friendship has ripened into close brotherhood

TONY: Where's me lob?

BILL: I've always had your best interests at heart… and being your financial adviser and business manager… and being a firm believer in your security for the future…

TONY: If you've still got the empties - can I have those?

BILL: After all, ask yourself - what would you have been without me?

TONY: Rich.

BILL: Look - when you've been in trouble, haven't you always been able to turn to me for help? Have I ever refused you advice…?

TONY: Alright, alright. Just tell me what you spent it on.

BILL: Spent it? Spent it? Do you honestly believe that I would spend money that doesn't belong to me? I didn't spend it - I invested it.

TONY: What in?

BILL: National Savings.

TONY: Good lad, well done. I've misjudged you. What a good idea. National Savings.

BILL: Yeah - it was running at Goodwood.

TONY: (FURIOUS) I knew it! A horse! He backed a horse!

BILL: Tony - take it easy.

TONY: How many legs did this one have?

BILL: Tony… Tony - put that bread knife down.

TONY: Oh, me money. Me ten nicker. Gone. I don't feel well. I'm going to have one of me turns. I must sit down. Where's the chair?

EFFECTS: (TERRIFIC CRASH AS CHAIR COLLAPSES)

TONY: (SHOUTS) You and your cricket team. (GROANS)
EFFECTS: (DOOR CHIMES)

BILL: I'll get it.

TONY: You will when you get back. (GROANS - EXITS)

EFFECTS: (DOOR CHIMES)

BILL: Coming!!

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

MOIRA: Hello Bill.

BILL: Moira, my favourite woman. Come in, come in. Pull up a coal scuttle and sit down.

MOIRA: (APPROACHING MIKE) Thanks Bill. Mmm, the flats looking different somehow. It's those new lace curtains.

BILL: It's no good, we've got to get those spiders out of here.

MOIRA: What a place this is. It gets more dusty every time I see it.

BILL: Dusty? Nonsense - you could eat your dinner off these floors.

MOIRA: I know, - I've seen you. At least you might sweep the bones up. It looks like Death Valley.

BILL: You should see the back garden. Last time I saw country like that, Humphrey Bogart was pulling a boat through it.

MOIRA: And all those empty bottles. What are they doing here?

BILL: We're waiting for the milkman to come and collect them.

MOIRA: Milkman? What sort of cow did these come from - Highland Laddie - eighty-six proof? Honestly, there's so much junk in here, you could get lost.

BILL: I can't understand it - we have a woman come in every morning.

MOIRA: Yes - to hunt for the one that came in the day before. Well, where's the owner of this upholstered dustbin?

BILL: I'm not sure - I think he's having a look at the bathtub.

MOIRA: He's not going to have a bath?
BILL: No - seeing how the gin's getting on. I'll call him. (CALLS) Hey - Tub.

TONY: (OFF) Hallo.

BILL: Somebody for you.

TONY: (OFF) Why don't they leave me alone - I've done me time.

BILL: It's Moira.

TONY: (COMING ON) Why didn't you say so. I was halfway out of the window with me toothbrush. Hello Moira.

MOIRA: Hello Tony I……. Tony - what have you done to your finger? It's all burned and blistered.

TONY: I dipped it in the gin.

BILL: Boy, this lot must be pretty strong stuff!

TONY: Best we've ever made.

BILL: I wonder what effect it'll have on people.

TONY: I don't know, but it's taken the enamel off the bath. I gave the cat a spoonful.

BILL: Yeah? Where is he?

TONY: Next door, trying to drag that bulldog out of it's kennel.

MOIRA: Just a minute, what are you making this gin for ?

TONY: It's for me dinner party.

MOIRA: Dinner party?

TONY: Yes - didn't Bill tell you? I'm inviting all the radio critics and the heads of the BBC round here to celebrate the first night of me new radio show…. 65 of them - and every one a V.I.P.

MOIRA: Invite them here? Are you mad? You can't ask people like that to a place like this.

TONY: Why not?

MOIRA: Look at the state it's in! Even the mice have stopped inviting their friends round.
Besides it's much too small. If you get 65 people in here, they won't be able to turn round.

BILL: We could grease 'em up a bit.

TONY: Don't worry, Moira, the size of the flat won't bother us at all. We've already worked out the seating arrangements. Here's the plan. You'll notice everybody's got a place to sit.

MOIRA: Oh yes, I see. Now where are we ?

TONY: This is the room we're in now.

MOIRA: Mmm. It's bigger on the plan than it is in the flat.

TONY: You'll see, we've got sixteen people round the table.

BILL: And another sixteen under the table.

TONY: That's right. Then when the pudding comes in, we blow a whistle and they all change places.

MOIRA: Well that's thirty-two taken care of. What about the rest?

BILL: Well, you'll notice that the trestle tables sort of snake out of the door and along the passage.

TONY: Thus providing ample eating opportunities for the six herbert's with long forks sitting on the bannisters.

BILL: Then we've got six guys sitting round the bed -

TONY: Three in the coal cellar -

BILL: Two in the loft -

TONY: The Director General in the bath, eating off the soap rack -

BILL: Two on the mantlepiece -

TONY: One up the chimney…

BILL: Yeah - we're poking his dessert up on the end of a flu-brush.

TONY: And we've got three standing round the kitchen sink. We won't need a plate for them - just put the plug in and throw in a couple of gallons of soup.

MOIRA: That still leaves twelve unaccounted for.

TONY: Hmmmm - tricky. Forgotten about them. How many stairs have we got?

BILL: Fourteen.

TONY: That's it then. One to sit on, one to eat off. That's another seven catered for. We'll just have to lean the others up against the wall.

MOIRA: Oh, what a pity …. (SARCASTIC)... I thought we might put meat hooks under their collars and hang them on the picture rail.

BILL: (SERIOUS) Yeah…

MOIRA: (QUICKLY) I was kidding. Look Tony, this maybe alright for your friends.. But these are important people. They're cultivated, well-bred, refined. They're not used to squatting on orange boxes, licking baked beans and gravy off tin plates.

TONY: They don't have to do any licking - they've got a lump of bread each, haven't they?

MOIRA: But you can't go through with it - it'd be an insult to ask these people along here. They'd never forgive you. Why, the BBC would never give you another broadcast… and the critics would tear you to bits.

TONY: They do and I'll jigsaw puzzle all over them.

BILL: You know, Tony - I think Moira's got something. Those guys will feel out of place here. They'd be uncomfortable - like we would be if we were invited to a clean place.

TONY: I fail to see any similarity. I admit the flat may be a little neglected. I'll even admit that in places you might be able to write your name in the dust…

MOIRA: Only if you had a hammer and chisel.

TONY: Look, I'm not cancelling the party - there's too much at stake. If we don't have it here, we'll have to hold it somewhere else, that's all.

MOIRA: Yes - but where?

BILL: I know a guy who might be able to help us out there. A friend of mine.

TONY: Not Edwardian Fred?

BILL: No.

TONY: Light-fingered Louis?... Crew-cut Charlie… Spanish Harry…?

BILL: No, no - I told you, I don't see those fellows any more. They've closed down the Youth Club.

MOIRA: Youth Club? Spanish Harry? He made his first jail break with Monte Cristo. I can't understand why you mix with those crooks.

BILL: Well, they're handy guys to know. If ever I want anything, I just contact one of the boys and I get it a lot cheaper than I would through the usual channels, that's all.

TONY: where do they get 'em from?

BILL: I don't know - but it generally makes the headlines.

MOIRA: And who is the crook that's -

BILL: (CORRECTING) Business associate.

MOIRA: Alright… who's the crooked business associate who's going to help us get a place for the party?

BILL: A guy I've known for years. The boys tell me he's just opened an estate agent's office. He's an honest, upright, respectable, law abiding member of the community.

TONY: What's his name?

BILL: Smooth-talk Sidney.

MOIRA: Oh no!

BILL: Don't worry - Sidney's as honest as the day is long.

TONY: (ANGRY) That's not much of a reference in November.

BILL: Look - you've got nothing to worry about.

TONY: I don't like it.

BILL: But Sidney's a friend of mine - a trusted friend.

TONY: Oh, alright - we'll go and see him.

BILL: Now what are you doing?

TONY: Sewing me pockets up.

GRAMS: ORCHESTRAL LINK
EFFECTS: (ECHOEY FOOTSTEPS ON COBBLESTONES.
SUDDEN CAT SQUEAL !)

GRAMS: ORCHESTRAL WATERFRONT MOOD MUSIC

EFFECTS: (ECHOEY FOOTSTEPS ON COBBLESTONES.)
GLOOMY SHIPS SIRENS - DISTANT.
BARREL ORGAN PLAYING "Loveliest night of the year"
CAR DRAWS UP.
GLASS CRASH.
SCREAMS.
SHOTS.
POLICE WHISTLE.
CAR RACES AWAY.
DEAD SILENCE.
BARREL ORGAN AGAIN.
GLOOMY SIRENS.

BILL: Well, this is the street.

TONY: What - where Jack the Ripper worked?

BILL: No, this is where Sidney's Estate Office is.

TONY: If this is the best he can do for himself, what's he going to lumber <u>us</u> with?

BILL: Quit worrying - all Sidney's property is in the West End.

MOIRA: Then why has he got an office down here in the docks?

BILL: It's very handy if ever he wants to make a…. Business trip. He's got a gang plank running from his back window onto a South American banana boat. Come on, this is his office up here - the one with the windows.

MOIRA: Oh, yes - there's a yellow cross painted on the door.

BILL: Well, here we are.

EFFECTS: (KNOCK - KNOCK. FRONT DOOR OPENS WITH SINISTER CREAKING)

SNIFFY: Good after… (SNIFF SNIFF) ...noon.

TONY: Good afternoon.

SNIFFY: Can I… (SNIFF SNIFF)... help you?

MOIRA: Yes, we wish to see Mr. James.

SNIFFY: Certain.. (SNIFF)...ly. What.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Names shall I.. (SNIFF SNIFF)..give?

TONY: Bill Kerr, Tony Hancock and Moira Lister.

SNIFFY: Bill.. (SNIFF SNIFF) Kerr, Tony.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Hancock and Moira.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Lister.

MOIRA: That's right.

SNIFFY: You'll have to… (SNIFF SNIFF).. wait. Mr… (SNIFF SNIFF)... James is on the… (LOTS OF SNIFFS).. Blower.

BILL: Perhaps he'll.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Lend it to you when he's .. (SNIFF SNIFF)... finished with it.

SNIFFY: I'll just go and … (SNIFF SNIFF).. Tell Mr. James you're… (SNIFF SNIFF).. Here.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN AND SHUT)

TONY: Who was.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. That?

BILL: Coatsleeve Charlie - he's Sidney's clerk. He used to be a great artist. Pride was his downfall - he insisted in signing his works with his own name.

MOIRA: What's wrong with that?

BILL: They were five pound notes.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

SNIFFY: Mr.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. James will .. (SNIFF SNIFF) .. see you now. Will you.. (SNIFF SNIFF) .. come this … (SNIFF SNIFF)... way please. That.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Door.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. There.

TONY: Thank you.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Very much.

EFFECTS: (KNOCK ON DOOR)

SIDNEY: (OFF MIKE. CALLS) There's a knob there - turn it.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

SIDNEY: (CLOSER TO MIKE> CALLS) Won't keep you a minute - I've got a new tenant on the phone. (ON MIKE) Now look lady, I've told you, I can't let you have the place any cheaper. Four guineas a week and six hundred quid for the fittings. What do you mean, what fittings? You've got a nail in the wall to hang your hat on haven't you? And another thing, you've got running water. Eh? Well put a bowl under it. What!!? You want it decorated? I'll send some balloons round, do it yourself. Alright, alright, take it to the Rent tribunal. Yes… 'course I'll be there - I'm the Chairman. Goodbye.

EFFECTS: (RECEIVER DOWN)

SIDNEY: Stupid old moo…. Just because she's me grandmother she thinks she can get things on the cheap. Now then -

TONY: Er - good afternoon.

BILL: Good afternoon.

SIDNEY: Blimey - where's the other one?

BILL: What other one?

SIDNEY: Speak no Evil.

BILL: Sidney - don't you recognise me? It's Billy - Billy Kerr.

SIDNEY: Why of course - Billy. How are you? Last time I saw you, you were running a big timber and phosphorous business in the city.

TONY: Who - Bill ?

SIDNEY: Yes - he was selling matches outside the Mansion House. Here Billy, who are the mugs?

BILL: Please, Sidney - these are friends of mine.

SIDNEY: Strange - they look quite normal to me. (INTIMATE) Here - that's a nice piece of crackling you've brought along with you. It's the best one I've ever seen you with. What's your name my dear?

TONY: Tony.

SIDNEY: Do me a favour, I'm talking to the girl.

TONY: Well, you were looking at me.

SIDNEY: I was watching your hand in my cigar box. Now get it out. Now then Billy, introduce me to the young lady.

BILL: Sure. Sidney James - Moira Lister.

MOIRA: How do you do Mr. James.

SIDNEY: Pleased to meet you Moira. Permit me to er.. Shake your hand.

TONY: (CLENCHED TEETH) You won't find her hand round there.

SIDNEY: Oh shut up.

TONY: My girl.

SIDNEY: Why don't you go home - the other sea lions'll be missing you.

TONY: (HURT) Well - s'my girl - who paid her fare down here?

MOIRA: Look Mr. James - we were wondering if you could help us.

TONY: He's good at helping himself.

MOIRA: Tony!

TONY: (SULKING) Well - s'my girl… (MUMBLES TO HIMSELF)

SIDNEY: And take your hands out of my cigar box. Now then…

BILL: It's like this Sidney - some of the boys were telling me you'd gone into the estate business.

SIDNEY: Well, I had to do something. I packed up my last business enterprise because of complaints from the G.P.O.

TONY: Complaints?

SIDNEY: Yeah - in the end I had more mailbags than they did. Now what can I do for you?

BILL: We want to find a flat for the weekend.

SIDNEY: (KNOWING LAUGH) Billy, Billy, still up to your old games eh? (LAUGHS AGAIN)

MOIRA: Look, Bishop - we don't want it for that - Bill can hold his card school somewhere else. Tony is throwing a dinner party and we're looking for somewhere to hold it.

BILL: That's right. We figured you might have somewhere on your books we could hire for the night…. You know - something classy.

SIDNEY: Oh, I get it - you want a posh flat so you can kid these people that it's your own place eh?

TONY: That's it - you've hit the nail right on a horse of a different colour.

SIDNEY: Well, I think I may have something right up your street.

TONY: No thanks, we're trying to get away from there.

SIDNEY: Look, stupid I…… get your hands out of my cigar box.

TONY: Sorry.

SIDNEY: Now then, let's see what we've got on the list. Here's one - a furnished flat over the top of a bank in….. No no, you can't have that.

BILL: Why not?

SIDNEY: I've got two of the boys in taking the floorboards up.

TONY: Look… don't trouble - it doesn't seem as if you've got anything - we'll go somewhere else.

SIDNEY: No, don't go away, don't go away - I'll find you a place if I have to -

EFFECTS: (CRASH OF CIGAR BOX LID)

TONY: (YELLS)

SIDNEY: I told you to keep your hand out of my cigar box.

TONY: You didn't have to slam the lid so hard. (GROANS) Ooooh me hand. I think you've got five extra cigars in there now.

SIDNEY: Look, about this flat - I've just had a brilliant idea. What about a beautiful luxury penthouse apartment in Park Lane - furnished, use of wine cellar, all food supplied. Two days - fifty nicker, move in tomorrow.

TONY: Done.

SIDNEY: (ASIDE) You certainly have been.

TONY: Eh?

SIDNEY: Never mind. Here's the address - 23 Park Lane.

MOIRA: Are you sure this is all above board?

SIDNEY: You've got nothing to worry about - by the time you get down there the place'll be empty….. You can do what you like. Fifty nicker please.

TONY: Will you take a cheque?

SIDNEY: Cheque, schmeck - I want fifty nicker on the nose.

TONY: Alright - hold your head up. One, two, three, four…

SIDNEY: I'll do him in, so help me, I'll do him in. Get him out of here.

TONY: Just going - ha! Ha! Good health. Cab!

SIDNEY: (CALLS) And don't forget - 23 Park Lane.

EFFECTS: (DOOR SLAMS)

SIDNEY: Charlie.

SNIFFY: Yes, Mr.. (SNIFF SNIFF) .. James?

SIDNEY: Take a telegram. Urgent. To Lord and Lady Dockyard, 23 Park Lane. Leave for Scotland immediately - Grandma strained herself while tossing the caber. Signed - Father. (CHUCKLES). What a stroke of genius.

SNIFFY: (Brilliant Mr.. (SNIFF SNIFF) ..James. You must be feeling.. (SNIFF SNIFF) .. very pleased with yourself.

SIDNEY: I am Charlie - I am. No - one ever puts anything over on Sidney. (CHUCKLES) Pass me the cigar box.

SNIFFY: Here you are Mr.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. James. I - …. That's very.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. Funny.

SIDNEY: What?

SNIFFY: There ain't none… (SNIFF SNIFF).. In it.

SIDNEY: (REPROVING) Charlie - not " there ain't none in it". Where's your grammar?... There aren't any in there. If I've told you once I've … (TAKE)... there ain't none in it?? (FURIOUS) He's whipped 'em! And I thought that was a pair of brown gloves he had in his pocket! I'll Kill Him! Where is he - find him.. Etc….

GRAMS: LONGISH ORCHESTRAL LINK

EFFECTS: (STREET SCENE …. FOOTSTEPS ON PAVEMENT)

TONY: Well, this is Park Lane. Let's see now … seventeen ... nineteen… twenty one … Here we are - twenty three.

MOIRA: Tony - what a beautiful place - it must have cost a fortune.

TONY: Yes - look on the doorstep - gold plated foot scrapers.

BILL: I told you Sidney would see us alright. Fancy doubting his honesty when he owns a place like this.

TONY: Yes, I admit I was wrong. I feel ashamed of myself for not trusting him.

BILL: I should think so.

TONY: Now, where's that crowbar he gave us to open the door with because he's lost the key?

BILL: Here it is. Just.. wedge it .. in the door … now… (GRUNTS WITH STRAIN)

EFFECTS: (DOOR SPLINTERS)
BILL: There we are - in. Simple.

MOIRA: Yes - too simple. Are you sure you haven't done this before?

TONY: Oh - come on, let's go in.

EFFECTS: (FOOTSTEPS ON SLIGHT ECHO)

MOIRA: (SLIGHT ECHO. OVERAWED) BILL - look! I've never seen a place like it in all my life. It's fabulous.

BILL: Yeah. Look at the hallway - you could run a bus route through here.

MOIRA: It's like a palace.

BILL: Mmmm. I wonder what's in here?

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

BILL: (ECHO) Hey - look - it's even got a ballroom. This is great. (SINGS WALTZ, GOING OFF) Look - I'm dancing. (SINGS ... SWAN LAKE - AD LIBS)

MOIRA: Bill!

BILL: (OFF MIKE) Yeah?

MOIRA: (SHOUTS) Come out of that airing cupboard.

TONY: (OFF MIKE) Moira - Bill - come quickly! Help!!

MOIRA: Where are you?

TONY: (OFF MIKE) In the dining room - help!

EFFECTS: (RUNNING FOOTSTEPS)

BILL: (CALL) We're coming.

MOIRA: Tony - what's wrong?

TONY: (ON MIKE) Me feet - they're gone. Can't find me feet. Where's me feet.

MOIRA: You're standing on the carpet.

TONY: Oh.

BILL: So this is the dining room, huh? Hey - get a load of this furniture.

MOIRA: Isn't it <u>beautiful</u>? Look at the top of this table - it's been hand carved.

BILL: So has our's.

TONY: Only 'cos we haven't got any plates.

BILL: Say - what's that big thing hanging from the ceiling?

TONY: Stupid - that's a candelabra'

BILL: Since when have candles been wearing those things?

TONY: What a place. We've got everything we need for the party here …. Solid silver cutlery, posh dinner services, expensive wine glasses …

BILL: Yeah - I've seen my glass. I'm having that one over there.

TONY: No, you're not - that's mine.

BILL: I saw it first.

TONY: You're not having it … my party. There's plenty of other glasses.

BILL: I've taken a fancy to that one.

TONY: So have I. Let go of it.

BILL: Give it to me .

TONY: No, let go.

MOIRA: Put it down both of you - that poor goldfish has nearly fallen out three times. Now come on , let's start getting organised. .. there's a lot of work to be done.

GRAMS: " BUSY WORKING TIME " LINK

TONY: (OFF MIKE. CALLS.) Moira - where are you?

MOIRA: (ON MIKE) I'm in the dining room.

TONY: (APPROACHING MIKE) Ah, there you are. How are you getting on with the grub?

MOIRA: Fine. There's enough food in these cupboards to feed a regiment.

TONY: Good … you know what these BBC herberts are like when they're invited to parties. Starve themselves all week - then when they get here - whoof - you're lucky if you've got any patterns left on the plates.

MOIRA: Tony, don't you think it's all rather odd - I mean all this food - the wines - even the teapot's still warm. It's almost as though somebody's already living here.

TONY: No! Can't be. Sidney wouldn't let us have the place if somebody already lived here. That'd be criminal. We'd all be put in prison … and you know how I hate living with relatives.

MOIRA: Well … if you think it's alright …

TONY: Look - take my word for it, no - one lives here. Now get these big tins of caviar open while I nip down the cellar and get another couple of crates of champagne up. No sense in leaving anything.

BILL: (COMING ON MIKE) Hey, Tub - look what I found in the wardrobe upstairs. Suits me, huh?

TONY: Yes …. Lovely.

BILL: I'm going to wear it to the party tonight.

TONY: You are not.

BILL: Oh, but Tub -

TONY: No' No - one is coming to my party wearing a coronet, ermine robes and a gold plated mace. Now get it off.

BILL: O.K., O.K. It doesn't matter - there's plenty of other clothes up there.

TONY: Anything to fit me?

BILL: There should be - there's quite a large wardrobe up there.

MOIRA: <u>That</u> should fit him.

BILL: Well, I don't know - you'd have to leave the door open - and then again …

TONY: Alright, alright, that'll do. I realize I'm portly. can't help it. There's no need to make fun of me. I don't go around making rude remarks about skinny Australian layabouts.
MOIRA: Stop it you two. The guests will be arriving shortly, so let's make sure we've got everything ready.

BILL: But what about the food? Who's doing the cooking?

TONY: I've seen to that - I've had the Labour exchange send a French chef round.

BILL: What's his name?

TONY: Higgins. Pierre Higgins. Wonderful chef. Been cooking for many years now has Higgins. Bit old now, bit past it. I think he was the bloke what scraped the black bits off King Alfred's cakes.

BILL: What does this Higgins look like? I haven't seen the guy.

TONY: Oh, you won't see him, he's locked himself in the kitchen. Won't let no - one in. Say's he don't like no - one messing around his kitchen while he's working.

BILL: Then how the heck do we get in touch with him?

TONY: We'll just have to bend down and shout through the service hatch. Just a minute. (CALLS) Higgins!! Half past seven lad - give the eggs another turn. Oh - and Higgins - turn the gas down under that pressure cooker - them peas have been on long enough. I said turn the gas down under the pressure cooker …. The gas under the ….

EFFECTS: (EXPLOSION)

TONY: Never mind - I've always had a fancy for green polka dot ceilings. Now then, when the party begins we've all got our own little jobs to do. I, of course, being the host, will be expected to flit about from group to group indulging in gossip, repartee, chit chat and light hearted banter.

BILL: (VERY ENGLISH) How madly gay.

TONY: …. And Moira ....

MOIRA: Yes sir?

TONY: … At ease. You being the hostess .. will of course be called on to keep the men amused. How you do it is entirely up to you. I leave you with a completely free hand.

BILL: And believe me - with some of those producers, you'll need it.

TONY: Now you, Bill - you'd like to look after the drinks, wouldn't you?

BILL: Of course.

TONY: Well, you're not going to. You can be the toastmaster.

BILL: What do I have to do?

TONY: Sit in front of the fire with a big fork. Well, that's that.

MOIRA: Tony - we've forgotten something.

TONY: What?

MOIRA: We haven't got any butlers. Who's going to wait on the guests?

TONY: I hadn't thought of that. I know - we'll give 'em a tray each and they can queue up round the table.

BILL: Yeah - and I'll sit at the end with a cash register.

MOIRA: No. For a party like this we must have servants. We need at least two butlers - two refined, well - spoken gentlemen.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

SIDNEY: How much is the job paying?

BILL: Sidney - what are you doing here - and how far are the police behind you?

SIDNEY: Relax, Billy - I just came down to see how you were making out. How do you like the flat?

BILL: Great - great. I owe you an apology Sidney - I didn't realise you had places like this on your books.

SIDNEY: (ASIDE) Nor did I.

BILL: Huh?

SIDNEY: Forget it. So you need a butler, do you? Well I don't mind helping my friends out of a spot. Where's the monkey suit?

TONY: Hello, Mr. James.

SIDNEY: Blimey - he's <u>wearing</u> it.

MOIRA: Well, it's very nice of you to help us out, Mr. James. We still need another butler though.

SNIFFY: You called .. (SNIFF SNIFF) … milady.

TONY: Oh, it's … (SNIFF SNIFF) … you is it?

MOIRA: It's too late to argue - the guests'll be here any moment now. Sidney - Charlie - go and get the butlers' outfits on.

SIDNEY: Right. Come, Charlie.

SNIFFY: Coming Mr…. (SNIFF SNIFF) … James.

SIDNEY: (SOTTO) Now don't forget why we're here, Charlie. This is a posh set up - so remember your etiquette. You bends over them, places the soup in front of them with your right hand … and whips their wallets with your left hand.

SNIFFY: Yes Mr…. (SNIFF SNIFF)...James.

SIDNEY: And remember - nothing's too small ….. Cufflinks, watch chains, rings, tie pins, the lot.

SNIFFY: Don't worry, Mr. James. I won't turn my…. (LOTS OF SNIFFS)... nose up at anything.

EFFECTS: (DOOR SHUTS)

TONY: Well, I think we're all set now. This party will be the turning point of my career. Just think …. Tomorrow I shall be famous.

BILL: What about us?

TONY: Oh, I won't forget you. You'll come up <u>with</u> me. Together we'll soar to great heights. We'll leave all this far behind us - we'll climb up and up - higher and higher - until you're both up there amongsts the stars - with me.

BILL: Thank you and bless you - Jet Morgan.

EFFECTS: (DOOR BELL)

MOIRA: Tony - they're here - the guests have started to arrive.

TONY: Right, men - Action Stations!! (CALLS) Sidney!

SIDNEY: (OFF MIKE) Hello.

TONY: (CALLS) Stand by the door and call the guest's names as they come in.

SIDNEY: (OFF MIKE) Alright. Bighead, bacon bonce, four eyes….

TONY: (YELLS) No - fool - their proper names. I'll stand here and receive me guests as they come through the door. Moira - you go and drape yourself over the couch. (

CALLS) Higgins - they've arrived. Put the spuds on. Bill - switch the radiogram on - let's have some nice unobtrusive music in the background.

GRAMS: (FEW BARS OF " EBB TIDE ")

TONY: (YELLS) Not that one. Oaf!

BILL: Sorry - I'll play the other side.

GRAMS: (" CHARMAINE " - IN BACKGROUND)

TONY: That's better. Right - here we go. Open the cage. Let 'em in.

EFFECTS: (DINNER GONG)

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) Mr. Pat Hillyard, Head of the Variety Department, BBC.

TONY: 'Ow do you do. So glad you've come. Hope you didn't have any trouble parking your bike.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) Mr. Kenneth Adam - Controller of the Light Programme.

TONY: Oh, pleased to meet you. Have a sausage. Put the stick back, we ain't got enough to go round.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) The Director General of the BBC.

TONY: Your majesty - this is indeed an honour. How's the old woman. Kid's alright? Dig in lad.

SIDNEY: The Editor of the Radio Times.

TONY: Charmed. Soup will be served at 9 o'clock.. Followed by hors d'oeuvres at 9.15. Minutes interval - then at 9.16 approximately, we feature the main course - 30 minutes of popular favourites presented by Pierre Higgins with crepe suzette on the piano. 9.45 - dessert - 10. O'clock - close down. The Queen. Next…

BILL: Hey, Tony - here come the press boys - all the newspaper critics.

TONY: Better to be careful here - these are the boys who matter. Diplomacy, that's what's needed.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) Mr. Clifford Davis of the Daily Mirror.

TONY: Good old Jane. Three cheers for Buck Ryan. Cassandra for ever.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) Mr. Robert Connell of the Daily Express.

TONY: Up the Beaver. Empire trade. Give us back India.

SIDNEY: Mr. Jonah Barrington - Daily Sketch. Mr. James Thomas - News Chronicle - and Mr. Hersland Gandor - Daily Telegraph.

TONY: Hello - all come in the same cab - three expense sheets going in. Crafty. Good luck. Mum's the word - the lad understands.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) Mr. Collie ? Knox of the Daily Mail and Mr. Phillip Phillips of the Daily Herald.

TONY: Good old Churchill … no .. three cheers for Attlee … that is .. Eden for ever .. no - vote for Bessie Braddock … I mean … I'm a liberal myself.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) Miss Mary Crozier of the Manchester Guardian.

TONY: I'll take your flat hat, shall I? Stick your umbrella in one of the gumboots, We don't want any puddles over the carpet. Tripe and onions on the sideboard. Good health.

SIDNEY: (ANNOUNCING) The Sound Radio Correspondent of the Times.

TONY: Hallo, Flash - how are you? Haven't seen you down the Palais lately. Hallo - that's a nasty scar you've got there. Been at it with the bicycle chains again?

MOIRA: Tony - I think we'd better start dinner. They're nearly all in.

TONY: Right. Alright - come on lads - diner cat servi … diner cat … diner ….. Grub up.

EFFECTS: (CROWD CHATTER.
CLINKING OF CROCKERY.
SCRAPING OF CHAIRS.
MUSIC STILL IN BACKGROUND.)

GRAMS: ORCHESTRAL LINK

EFFECTS: (DINNER TABLE NOISES.
VOICES.
RADIOGRAM IN BACKGROUND)

TONY: So I said to him at the time - " Rank," I said, " I ain't having it. I don't like your attitude.. " - have some more asparagus. As I was saying, I put me foot down 'cos you know me - I'm an easy man to get on with until I'm roused, then I'm up there like a

shot. I'm in there. I'll be led - but not pushed. So I said to J. Arthur - …… " Ranky " I said, " I don't care if you <u>can</u> get Marilyn Monroe to star in the film with me, I'm not doing it….. I don't want the part. I ain't stripping off and bashing that gong for nobody." Well, he was taken aback I can tell you. His eyes went glassy and …. Oh my word - look - your glass is empty. Have another quart of Napoleon brandy. And how's the Director General getting on, eh lad? What? Run out of caviare? Oh - soon get that seen to. Hold on. (CALLS) Higgins - get another sturgeon.

EFFECTS: (PARTY ATMOSPHERE AND BACKGROUND MUSIC)

MOIRA: I see. So you think you could get me into the pictures eh? Uh - huh. You think I'm terrific and you've never seen anybody like me? Oh - I've got just the right type of face? I see. And naturally you'll want me to come up to your flat at eleven o'clock one evening to read the script - by candlelight of <u>course</u> . Well I'm sorry but I've been in pictures for sometime now. Yes. Who do I work for? YOU. Now sober up and stop wasting your time.

EFFECTS: (PARTY ATMOSPHERE & MUSIC, SEVERAL PEOPLE SNORING.)

BILL: So you see fellows, this commercial traveller's car broke down in the middle of the night see? …. Are you listening fellows? … So he goes up to this farmhouse and says - " Can you put me up for the night? " So the farmer says - " I'm sorry but I've only got two rooms. <u>I</u> sleep in one and my father sleeps in the other ". So the commercial traveller says - " Pardon me, I must be in the wrong story ". (LAUGHS)

EFFECTS: (SNORES. PARTY ATMOSPHERE)

SIDNEY: Hoy, Charlie.

SNIFFY: Yes, Mr.. (SNIFF SNIFF).. James?

SIDNEY: Keep it up boy - we're doing alright here. With the peaches and cream still to serve, we've got 65 wallets, 23 watches, 15 cigarette cases, three dozen tie pins, two pairs of socks and a vest. Blimey - at this rate, by the time we get down to the coffee they'll all be in the nude.

SNIFFY: Shall I… (SNIFF SNIFF) … take the ice cream round now Mr… (SNIFF SNIFF) .. James?

SIDNEY: Yes - you'd better take it round in cornets.

SNIFFY: Why?

SIDNEY: 'Cos I've packed all the spoons up in me suitcase! Now come on, back to work. Have some more ice cream sir?

VOICE: No thank you.

SIDNEY: (BELLIGERENT) Have some.

EFFECTS: (PARTY ATMOSPHERE)

BILL: Hey, Tony - the party seems to be flagging. Everybody's looking bored.

TONY: I know - we've got to do something about it.

BILL: There's only one thing that can save this party.

TONY: You mean …?

BILL: Yeah. Nip back to our place and get two buckets of that gin.

GRAMS: ORCHESTRAL LINK

CAST: (DRUNKEN VERSION OF "NELLIE DEAN")

BILL: There you are Tub. I told you that gin would put the party back on it's feet.

TONY: Only just though. They're holding onto each other as it is..

MOIRA: (APPROACHING MIKE) Tony, Tony, do something. They've just lit a fire.

TONY: That doesn't matter.

MOIRA: It does when it's on the table.

BILL: Yeah - look at those guys. That critic over there's got fifteen blancmanges all round him.

TONY: He must like 'em.

BILL: No - the Director General's throwing them at him.

EFFECTS: (CRASHES & BANGS OF FURNITURE, SMASH OF PLATE GLASS.)

MOIRA: We've got to stop them! They've started throwing things out of the window!

TONY: Well, don't tell me, tell Bill.

MOIRA: I can't - he was the first thing to go.

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

KENNETH: What the… ?! What's going on here?

TONY: Hello - a newcomer eh? Bit late for the party isn't he? Who is he?

MOIRA: He looks very distinguished - monocle - top hat - tails - spats…

TONY: That's funny - I don't remember inviting the Greyhound Express.

SIDNEY: (APPROACHING MIKE) Blimey - Charlie - scarper! Quick - look who's just come in - the geezer with the monocle.

SNIFFY: Who is he?

SIDNEY: The bloke who owns the place - Lord Dockyard. He couldn't have got our telegram. Come on - we've got to get out of here before the trouble starts. (GOING OFF) Gangway! Mind your backs! Thank you. (VICIOUS) Out of the way please - out of the way, I said. Git out of it….. (EXITS YELLING)

EFFECTS: (CROWD NOISES)

MOIRA: Well, go on Tony - the poor man looks absolutely bewildered. Don't be rude - go and bring him in.

TONY: Alright. Er…. good evening.

KENNETH: Good evening.

TONY: Was I …. Er.. expecting you?

KENNETH: Apparently not.

TONY: Well, never mind - you're very welcome. Make yourself at home.

KENNETH: Thank you - I'll try. Would you be so kind as to tell me just what is going on here?

TONY: 'Ello - bit posh ain't we? Well - actually - me and the boys 'ere are partaking of a slight booze - up. Nice place I've got 'ere, ain't it?

KENNETH: It used to be delightful. Tell me, who threw jelly over the Rembrandt?

TONY: I don't know - I suppose it was the same bloke what slashed up them Goyas.

KENNETH: What the … !? Look! (ANGUISHED) The carpet's on fire!!

TONY: My word, so it is. I really must remember to put me foot on me cigar butts.

KENNETH: (FURIOUS) That carpet cost £700!

TONY: Alright, alright, don't get aerated - pour a glass of beer over it - that'll put it out.

KENNETH: Oh no, no!!

TONY: Here - you alright? You've gone all white. You ain't cold are you? Here - jump up on the table and have a warm round the fire. Soon stoke it up. Chop up another couple of them Chippendales - we'll have a merry little blaze in no time.

KENNETH: Why you… ! This is monstrous! Young man - do you realise who I am?

TONY: No….. I'm afraid your mime wasn't very helpful. Do it again.

KENNETH: I am Lord Dockyard. I own this house and I am going to send for the police immediately.

TONY: (PAUSE) Oh dear. (SOTTO) Bill, Moira - run for it.

KENNETH: Come back … come back! Stop you scoundrel!

TONY: Goodnight.

KENNETH: Who are you! What's your name?

TONY: (OFF MIKE) Ted Ray. Gangway! Mind your backs. Measles - unclean - plague. Cab! Taxi! Rickshaw! Goodnight all ...etc.

GRAMS: " BACK TO TONY'S " LINK

EFFECTS: (DOOR OPEN)

BILL: Morning everybody.

MOIRA: Hello Bill.

TONY: Bill - did you get this morning's papers?

BILL: Yep - all here.

TONY: Good. This is what I've been waiting for. What have the critics said about me new show?

BILL: Nothing. They haven't mentioned it.

TONY: Not mentioned it? … After that party I gave 'em?

BILL: Nope. None of the papers are carrying a radio column this morning.

TONY: But they have one every morning - why not today ?

MOIRA: Why not? Read the stop press.

TONY: Show me. (READS) "Last night the Police were called to 23 Park Lane, where 65 hooligans were arrested on charges of housebreaking, drunken behaviour and abusive language. The Police are still looking for a little fat man by the name of Ted Ray". Bill ….

BILL: Yeah?

TONY: Ring up Sidney and book three passages on that South American banana boat.

GRAMS: "HANCOCK THEME"

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to Hancock's first 'Arf 'Our, featuring the lad 'imself, with Moira Lister, Bill Kerr, and Sidney James. Coatsleeve Charlie was played by Gerald Campion … and Lord Dockyard by Kenneth Williams. Incidental music was composed by Stanley Black. The script was written by Ray Galton and Alan Simpson - and the programme which was recorded was produced by Dennis Main Wilson.

GRAMS: " HANCOCK THEME" UP & TO END

(SEGUE)

GRAMS: PLAYOUT _ TO END